

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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SHOOTING HOURS UNCHANGED FOR EARLY SEASON MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING

The shooting hours for early season migratory game bird hunting will remain as they have been for years--starting at one-half hour before sunrise and ending at sunset, with a few exceptions--the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced in the August 10, 1977, Federal Register.

These regulations relate to doves, pigeons, rails, gallinules, woodcock, snipe, lesser sandhill cranes in North and South Dakota, all migratory game birds in Alaska, and mourning doves in Hawaii. The same hours are being proposed for waterfowl; however, the regulations for those species have not yet been finalized.

Shooting times were raised as an issue by the organization Defenders of Wildlife in a court action last year. A detailed environmental assessment was conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in compliance with the court ruling. Based on the assessment it was concluded that hunting during the half-hour before sunrise was not detrimental to migratory bird populations, including protected or endangered species.

Accordingly, States may now select and set shooting hours within these times for the 1977-78 early season.

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